

**CHILD SAFETY AWARENESS MONTH**  
**WEEK ONE: Be Aware While Backing**  
**~Take a Second Look ~**

DHSMV/FHP has designated August as Child Safety Awareness Month. This week we focus on safety around vehicles and preventing children from being hit when a vehicle is backing.

**Blind Zones**

- All vehicles have blind zones/blind spots.
- Get to know a vehicle's blind spots.
- Typically, the larger the vehicle, the larger the blind zone; blind zones are often larger for shorter drivers.
- Blind zones can be affected by the size and shape of vehicle mirrors and windows, elevation of driver's seat, and slope of driveway.
- Keep your windows and mirrors clean. Never back a vehicle when the rear windows or any mirrors are covered with dirt or any other substances.

**Backing Out**

- When backing in and out of a driveway, make sure all children are safe and accounted for.
- Walk around and check behind your vehicle before you get in.
- Whenever possible use a person outside the vehicle to help you back up.
- Check your rearview and side mirrors. Roll down your windows to listen for children/pedestrians.
- Keep your foot on the brake until after you put the vehicle into reverse.
- Place your right arm on the back of the seat and turn around so that you can look directly through the rear window.
- Back slowly and check the path repeatedly.
- Bicyclists often ride on sidewalks so look both ways before backing over a sidewalk.
- Children on bicycles can be unpredictable and can make sudden changes in direction. Be especially careful when children are present (school zones and residential areas).
- Florida Law states (f.s. 316.1985): The driver of a vehicle shall not back the same unless such movement can be made with safety and without interfering with other traffic.
- Prevention of backing crashes is what it's about, so TAKE A SECOND LOOK, if you have any doubt!

**Driveway Safety**

- Discourage children from playing in driveways and designate safe play areas away from vehicles.
- If children play in the driveway, have an adult supervise at all times.
- Teach children to never play inside, on, around, or under vehicles.
- Keep vehicles in driveways/garages locked and store keys out of child's reach.
- Keep toys, bicycles, etc. off the driveway.